

women, many of whom I have the privilege to represent, are a backbone of our nation's economy. They work each day in an industry that has been dramatically altered by the larger economic and security crises facing our nation. Yet through it all, these dedicated men and women remain focused on public service and doing their jobs to their utmost ability.

As I and my colleagues can attest, TTD has helped policymakers understand the needs and concerns of those on the front lines of this important part of our daily life and our economy. We sadly don't invest enough on our infrastructure, and I am heartened to hear TTD call for greater investment in transportation infrastructure. They understand how it can both rebuild our nation and put Americans back to work. In my travels through Northeast Ohio, I see firsthand how our infrastructure is crumbling and families are struggling to get by. Our quality of life and the strength and efficiency of our economy will not fully improve unless we make critical infrastructure investments.

I again commend TTD on their anniversary, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on these issues facing our nation.

HONORING HARRY L. BEGLE,  
HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

**HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an American hero, Harry L. Begle of Brooksville, Florida. A decorated war veteran, Lieutenant Begle's service to our nation will forever be remembered by this Congress.

Born in Lexington, Virginia, Lt. Begle graduated from Fork Union Military Academy in 1943 and entered WW II soon thereafter.

He served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division and an Assistant Platoon Leader with the H Company 3rd Battalion in the 506th Parachute Division. While deployed outside of Bastogne, Belgium, Lt. Begle's platoon came under attack by a German Infantry. To describe that moment, Lt. Begle said, it was then that "all hell broke loose". During the battle, Lt. Begle's hand was struck by a bullet, and his upper body was struck by shrapnel from an artillery shell explosion. The blast caused wounds in his neck and left him in a British Military hospital for several months. Lt. Begle received a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart for his courageous actions in battle.

Despite his wounds and time spent away from the front lines, Lt. Begle returned to serve his country abroad once again in 1945. This time in Austria. He was later transferred to the 82nd Airborne Division when the Pacific ended.

In 1946, he returned home. He marched in the WW II victory parade in New York where he was greeted with a heroes welcome. He served as a reservist until 1949 when he was honorably discharged.

Long after his military days had passed, he continued to protect his fellow Americans, serving as a Washington D.C. Police Officer for 23 years; he retired in 1972.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Harry L. Begle; a beloved and decorated American hero. On behalf of a grateful nation,

this Congress, his family and friends, I thank him for his service and sacrifice to our country.

HONORING MODESTO CHRISTIAN  
HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY FOOT-  
BALL TEAM

**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate the Modesto Christian High School Varsity Football Team upon winning the California Interscholastic Federation Small Schools State Football Championship on Friday, December 18, 2009. The team will be honored on Thursday, January 7, 2010.

The Modesto Christian High School Varsity Football Team consists of 31 players including: Isaiah Burse, Jose Oseguera, Keaton Engel, Kevin Roya, Damien Bell-White, Nate Sudfeld, Aaron Brown, Dominic Dami, Alec Pearson, David Sielin, Dustin Hayes, Ryn Megee, Raymond Nelson, Nathan Straubinger, Johnny Juvera, Nick Carson, Brandon Baker, Danie Hague, Tyke Andrew, Vince Rovedatti, Cody Daniel, Matt Heinrich, Michael Fahlgren, Steve Rubalcava, Evan Schwartz, Vinny Warda, Jacob Alameda, Josh Lane, Tyler Jamison, Thomas Deshields and Colin Lane. The team was led by Head Coach, Mike Parsons and the rest of the coaching staff: Ron Megee, Andy Strickland, P. Jay Thirault, Darin Higgins, Steve Gleason, Adam Foster, Mark Dobbins and Noel Alfaro.

The hard work and dedication of the entire team led the Modesto Christian Crusaders to an undefeated season; winning eleven regular season games, three section playoff games and the final championship game with a final 15-0 record. The team not only won all of the games they played, but they dominated their opponents, averaging 45 points per game.

With Modesto Christian Principal Cynthia Jewel and Athletic Director Greg Pearce cheering the team on, the team made their way to the championship game. The game was held at the Home Depot Field in Carson, California against Parker High School of San Diego, California. Parker's football team entered the game with an 11-2 record, and a 45-point scoring average per game.

With Isaiah Burse as quarterback, the Crusaders were able to move the ball quickly throughout the game. However, Parker was able to move the ball equally as well, leading to a nail biter. In the final minutes of the game, the Crusaders were holding on to a 44-40 lead, but Parker was moving the ball quickly down the field. With fourth-and-goal at the two, and 1 minute 40 seconds to play, the Crusaders defense dug deep to hold the Parker offense. The Crusaders were able to pick up a first down, triggering a celebration on their sideline and a final score of 44-40, with Modesto Christian on top.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate the 2009 Modesto Christian High School Football Team upon its achievements and upon becoming the California Interscholastic Federation Small Schools State Football Champions. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing the entire team and coach-

ing staff congratulations on its many accomplishments this season.

RECOGNITION OF MERLE J. PRATT

**HON. MARY JO KILROY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 22, 2010*

Ms. KILROY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Merle J. Pratt, a great American who has worked for decades to protect our nation, advocate for our veterans, and strengthen the State of Ohio. Currently a resident of Powell, Ohio, Merle has loyally served our nation as a member of the United States Navy, an employee for the State of Ohio, and a leader in numerous community organizations.

Merle served in the U.S. Navy for 26 years, including five years of active duty and over two decades in the U.S. Naval Reserve until his retirement in 1994 as a chief petty officer. Merle also served the Buckeye State in the Ohio Secretary of State's office and the Ohio Attorney General's office. After 26 years of service, Merle retired from his position as the Director of Constituent Services and Veteran Liaison for the Ohio Attorney General's office in 2009. His devotion to helping Ohio citizens and veterans inspired Ohio Attorney General Jim Petro to award Merle with the Innovation and Excellence Award in 2003.

In addition to his career as a public servant in the State of Ohio, Merle has served as a trustee, chairman, or president for many organizations and chapters dedicated to helping our nation's veterans, including the Military/Veterans Educational Foundation, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Columbus Veterans Day Parade Committee, the American Legion, the Franklin County Veteran's Memorial Board of Trustees, the Ohio Governor's Veterans Advisory Committee, and the Ohio Attorney General's Veterans Advisory Council. He has also been a longtime member of the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Executive Committee, the Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee, the Ohio Veterans Employment and Training Council, and the Ohio Military Activation Task Force. Merle has been a Life Member of AMVETS Post 89 and served as the Chairman of the AMVETS State Legislative Committee from 1999 to 2009, during which he was awarded the prestigious AMVETS Silver Helmet Civil Servant of the Year award in 2004 for his passion and continued service to veterans in central Ohio. As a true public servant, Merle is continuing to actively participate in veterans services, and is currently serving as Commander for the AMVETS Department of Ohio.

Throughout his life, Merle has inspired those around him with his continued dedication to helping veterans and military families. On February 20, 2010, Merle will be recognized by the AMVETS Department of Ohio for his decades of invaluable service. I am proud to join this group in honoring Merle Pratt, whose leadership and commitment to our veterans, both in the Columbus community as well as around the nation, has been an inspiration and a blessing in the lives of countless Americans.